

107 Forming compound nouns and adjectives

1 Compound nouns

A compound noun is a noun made from two words. The first noun is usually singular.

We sometimes write compound nouns as one word (e.g. *newspaper, supermarket*) and sometimes as two separate words (e.g. *car park, ice cream*). It is best to check the correct form in a dictionary.

We can make compound nouns by adding a noun, verb or adjective to a noun:

noun + noun	bedroom clothes shop furniture shop record shop pizza restaurant traffic jam history teacher credit card
noun + verb-er	DVD player dishwasher taxi driver
noun + verb-ing	ice-skating snowboarding horse-riding
verb-ing + noun	shopping centre washing machine living room swimming pool
adjective + noun	best friend grandfather supermarket whiteboard

The stress is usually on the first syllable:

living room, traffic jam, horse-riding, grandfather

The first word usually gives more information about the second word. It can tell us:

- What kind of thing?
a bathroom (= a room with a bath)
a clothes shop (= a shop which sells clothes)
- What kind of person?
a history teacher (= a person who teaches history)
a taxi driver (= a person who drives taxis)
- What is its purpose?
a washing machine (= a machine for washing clothes)
a tennis ball (= a ball for playing tennis)

2 Compound adjectives

Compound adjectives are made from nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs.

They usually have a hyphen (-) between the two words when they come before a noun:

number/measurement + noun	three-hour two-day two-kilometre 16th-century 250-gramme 600-dollar half-price half-hour full-time part-time ten-year-old
adjective + noun	high-quality high-speed low-price low-calorie
adverb + participle verb	well-known well-paid centrally-heated
self + verb/adjective/noun	self-employed self-confident self-service

A compound adjective gives us information about the noun that follows it:

We had a three-hour exam. (an exam that lasted for three hours)

We went on the high-speed train. (the train that travels at high speed)

I'd like a well-paid job. (a job which pays me a lot of money)



The noun in these adjectives is always singular:

✗ *He's a ten-years-old boy.* ✓ *He's a ten-year-old boy.*

✗ *#was a three-hours film.* ✓ *It was a three-hour film.*

Practice

1 Match the two parts of the sentences.

- 0 Our neighbours have got a swimming
- 1 Why don't you ask the taxi
- 2 Is there a washing
- 3 Last year we went snow
- 4 Zoe got a job as a French
- 5 She's on a special low-
- 6 Did you catch the high-
- 7 Is she related to that well-

- A calorie diet.
- B known actress?
- C pool in their garden.
- D speed train to Madrid?
- E machine in your house?
- F boarding in Switzerland.
- G teacher at the local school.
- H driver for directions?

2 GRAMMAR IN USE Choose the correct words in *italics* in the text.

The story of IKEA

IKEA is one the most famous (0) *shops of furniture* / *furniture shops* in the world. It has more than 300 stores and employs over 100,000 people. It was started by Ingvar Kamprad in Sweden in 1943.

The store is (1) *well-known* / *very known* for its (2) *cheap-price* / *low-price* furniture which customers have to put together at home. This is much cheaper than ordinary furniture. IKEA sells about 12,000 products; it has something for every room in the house – for (3) *livings* / *living rooms*, kitchens, bathrooms, dining rooms and (4) *bedrooms* / *sleeping rooms*.

All the stores are very large and (5) *self-service* / *serving-yourself*. They have enormous (6) *car* / *cars* parks. Shopping at IKEA is popular with families because every store has a safe place for children to play and a cheap restaurant. So if you get tired of shopping you can get a cup of coffee or an (7) *ice cream* / *ices cream*. It's like a huge (8) *central-shopping* / *shopping centre* inside one shop!



3 Each sentence contains a part of a compound word, but the other part is missing. Find the incomplete words. Then write the whole compound word.

- 0 Can you go to the *super* and buy me some bread? *supermarket*
- 1 Uncle Gerald doesn't work for a company – he's self
- 2 Coca-Cola is a well company throughout the world.
- 3 Our teacher wrote the answer on the white
- 4 Can I pay by credit in this restaurant?
- 5 We were late because there was a bad traffic on the motorway.
- 6 Glenda is one of our part workers, so she isn't here on Tuesdays.
- 7 How do you set the washing for a 40-degree wash?
- 8 Johnny can afford a big house; he's got a very paid job.
- 9 If you need to buy a new coat, there's a good clothes near me.
- 10 I'm on a low diet because I want to get fitter.